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ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

Note by the Secretary-General

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ANNEX

Report on the activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women, 1993

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report reviews and updates the key elements of the programming framework of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and provides information on initiatives the Fund has undertaken throughout 1993. UNIFEM, rooted in a social movement, is committed to ensuring that women are full participants of the development process. By serving as an effective advocate for women, UNIFEM introduces the gender component into every aspect of the development agenda.

2. Towards that end, UNIFEM has developed initiatives in three broad areas. First, it has launched programmes in every developing region to help women gain the skills they need to move into decision-making positions. Secondly, UNIFEM's approach to sustainable human development has integrated activities that support and promote women's human rights. Thirdly, UNIFEM has underscored the link between assistance to women refugees and longer-term development needs, by providing women with portable skills for rebuilding their communities.

3. UNIFEM is taking advantage of the various forthcoming United Nations world conferences to provide women with the skills and information they need to participate more effectively in international forums. The World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women, to be held in 1995, present opportunities for the international community to advance gender concerns in all aspects of economic, social and political life.

II. PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

A. Overview

4. The Fund continues to work in three key programme areas of strategic importance to women: agriculture, trade and industry and macro-policy and national planning. Initiatives in these areas are complemented by technical support for credit, technology transfer, small business development and training. UNIFEM's approach stresses capacity-building, women's empowerment, collaboration with appropriate partners and region-specific priorities. The Fund also addresses issues on the global agenda that critically affect women as beneficiaries and contributors to the development process.

5. An important emphasis of the Fund's work is placed on ways of linking women's development initiatives at the grass-roots level with the macro-policy formulation that shapes their future. The comparative advantage of UNIFEM resides at this very intersection of macro-policy and micro-action.

B. Africa

6. The convening of UNIFEM Africa Section staff twice a year has resulted in a greater harmonization of work between New York and the field offices, particularly a closer monitoring of the Section's 64 ongoing projects. The Section's strategies for action are articulated in the framework of the Africa

Investment Plan for the biennium 1994-1995. Under this cohesive programme, the Section is in a better position to rationalize its ongoing work with new initiatives.

7. In order to develop approaches and methodologies that mainstream gender concerns in national and regional development and harmonize UNIFEM and UNDP gender-related programming, the Africa Section has been engaged in a three-way dialogue with the Regional Programme and Policy Analysis Division of the Regional Bureau for Africa, and the Gender in Development Programme of the Bureau for Programme Policy and Evaluation, of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Agriculture and food security

8. A commodity-based, food-security strategy has been developed by the Africa Section. The goal is to link agricultural technology from research institutes with the experience of women working directly in the food production sector. The purpose is to raise food crop production to the level of importance given to cash crops in most national agriculture policies. Key staple food crops, such as sorghum, cassava and plantains, will be selected as appropriate to each of the three major agro-ecological zones in Africa.

9. The Multinational Programming and Operational Centre of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) at Yaoundé requested support from UNIFEM to conduct a study mandated by African Governments to assess appropriate food technologies in central Africa. The study, also funded by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), focused special attention on cassava and fish-related technologies. Its findings will be included in baseline research that UNIFEM will use for its agricultural strategy.

10. The UNIFEM-supported credit project on the mainland of the United Republic of Tanzania and the island of Zanzibar "Credit scheme for productive activities of women", is an example of the innovative and catalytic nature of the Fund's support. By the middle of 1993, it had assisted a total of 70 businesses to expand or diversify and had recorded a recovery rate of approximately 85 per cent. Because of the economic stimulus generated by the project, there is strong support from village elders and local government officials.

11. As part of the effort to ensure that, when donor funds expire, local alternatives will sustain the necessary investment, the Tanzanian Government has identified specific mechanisms for ensuring that the revolving fund will be maintained. For the mainland, a women's development fund will be established to assume the credit operations of the project, and for Zanzibar a technical unit will be set up to serve as the credit intermediary.

12. In Côte d'Ivoire, the project "Support for strengthening an agricultural cooperative for women", which had been hampered by water-supply problems, was reactivated to provide women with basic skills and credit while alternative cost-effective water-supply systems are explored. This UNIFEM-funded project, in consultation with UNDP, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Government, reflects a new shift towards strengthening food production and cooperatives in non-cash crop areas.

13. Promoting the exchange of scientific knowledge among women in similar agro-ecological zones is proving to be an effective strategy for empowerment in the west Africa region. For example, in Cameroon, some participants in the UNIFEM-funded "Cassava processing project" went on a study tour to Ghana to learn improved methods of cassava processing from Ghanaian women. The project also worked with AID Cameroon, an urban indigenous non-governmental organization of women scientists, economists and businesswomen, to help establish a gari processing plant. Together with 800 other rural women, they will purchase shares, manage the plant and eventually become owners.

Trade and industry

14. The Africa Section has worked on the formulation of a coherent trade and industry approach, which will form the basis of its assistance to women in business and the informal sector. Its major premise is that women predominate in informal trade activities in many parts of Africa, yet they often run their businesses handicapped by inadequate legal protection, policies, capital and skills conducive to successful business operations. Through practical initiatives in selected countries, lessons will be generated that will be shared with those who are designing macro-policies for trade and industry in Africa. Particular attention will be given to regional integration and rationalization of national and cross-border markets.

15. The review of a project begun in Chad in 1988 revealed that the technologies developed had not effectively reached women, and that raw materials had had to be imported from Nigeria at greater cost. Working with UNDP and a local non-governmental organization, the Association for Promotion of African Community Initiatives, the project is being reoriented to explore, with the women, the kind of assistance that will adequately respond to their needs.

16. UNIFEM's programme for "Women and enterprise development" in Namibia is now fully under way, and two new projects were signed as part of the programme, which was originally formulated in 1990 shortly after the country achieved independence. Because the country's institutions have undergone a number of shifts and redefinitions, the UNIFEM programme has also been redefined. This process has provided an important learning experience, which UNIFEM will apply to its future work in Eritrea, Liberia, Somalia and South Africa.

17. UNIFEM, along with Tototo Home Industries of Kenya, the Fund for a Free South Africa and World Education, is involved in a long-term programme to strengthen the training capacity of 17 women's organizations in South Africa. Initiated in 1991 with the formation of a group called "Kusoma" (a Kiswahili word meaning "to learn"), the process began with a participatory needs assessment and was followed in 1992 and 1993 by training in leadership skills for trainers, then business management training for representatives of women's non-governmental organizations from a broad spectrum of political, religious, economic and social backgrounds. For the Kusoma women, one of the most exciting aspects of the experience was to be trained by Kenyan and Swazi instructors working for Tototo.

Macro-policies and national planning

18. In collaboration with the African Development Bank (ADB) and the Centre de recherches, de documentation et d'information sur la femme (CREDIF), UNIFEM organized a meeting in Tunisia on gender issues in training and research. Among the participants were members of an advisory group on training and research that was created out of a brainstorming session held at Abidjan the previous year. This second session provided many of the participants with a new perspective and an analytical framework for understanding the roles of women in north Africa. The meeting helped identify entry points for potential assistance from donors interested in supporting gender training and research needs.

19. Activities have advanced towards the design of a large-scale programme, "Preparatory phase for building technical capacity and gender advocacy of young professional African women: a regional internship programme". Young African women have been placed on short-term internships with national, regional and international institutions that provide opportunities for technical and gender advocacy training. The proposed programme expects to fund the placement of 40 to 60 young women annually to these institutions. Executed by the African Academy of Sciences, the project has an advisory board of over 30 senior African professionals, which oversees the programme and prepares substantive training materials on such issues as gender-sensitization, mentoring and networking.

20. In the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), the "SADC women in development programme", funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), is providing gender training for officials in 17 units of the trade and mining industries. In addition, two research and pilot subprojects were launched. The first addresses environmental and technological constraints of women in energy-intensive rural industries, and the second, implemented in Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe, involves the training of approximately 300 women to be trainers in community-based legal rights education.

21. Following the highly regarded work in southern Africa of the Women in Law and Development in Africa (WILDAF) network, UNIFEM is funding the establishment of a WILDAF branch in francophone west Africa. The aim is to build a strong women's rights network to prepare and strategize for the 1994 Dakar Regional Conference to be held in preparation for the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women.

22. UNIFEM, together with UNDP and CREDIF, has developed a project to establish indicators and a women's watch to monitor the situation of women in Tunisia. UNIFEM has also published a brochure with social and economic data on how the productive role of Moroccan women has historically contributed to national development.

Refugees and violence: responding to women in crisis

23. UNIFEM is funding two initiatives emerging from its "African women in crisis umbrella programme". One initiative provides assistance for the rehabilitation of Eritrea through repatriation of Eritreans from the Sudan. The programme is intended to reintegrate up to 500,000 refugees from the Sudan and

to assist in rehabilitating the areas to which the majority of the refugees will return. Women head 35 per cent of these families and the male/female ratio is 97/100. An Eritrean UNIFEM consultant joined the initial fact-finding mission to assist in the analysis of gender issues in all aspects and sectors of the rehabilitation plans.

24. The second initiative is the continuation of an initial one-year project to provide assistance to Liberian women refugees in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire. To promote the linkage between humanitarian assistance and development, UNIFEM joined the Department of Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat in a mission to develop a four-pronged project focusing on mental health counselling, public health education, construction/shelter and credit for income generation.

25. Seven months after 35 women were trained at a course in construction, a women's centre was built in the Ghana refugee camp and a roof was put on a dormitory building for the camp's most disadvantaged women and their families. This training is having a ripple-effect as women have been helping build solid houses to withstand the rains and have plans for building family homes on their return to Liberia.

26. Following the successes in Ghana, UNIFEM funded income-generating activities in Côte d'Ivoire and Malawi, where over 250,000 refugees from Mozambique remain. UNIFEM is working together with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the Government of Malawi and voluntary organizations to develop a pilot project to address the problem of limited opportunities for income generation in the Nsanje district.

C. Asia and the Pacific

Women in decision-making

27. One of the most significant interventions by UNIFEM in this region was to support Cambodian women to strengthen their voice in the formation of the new Government after decades of war and destruction. This intervention demonstrated that UNIFEM's role as a catalyst often depends on being able to seize the moment with a strategic intervention that potentially has a far-reaching impact. In this case, support was provided for activities that put women in the centre of the political process. Mass media was used to encourage women to register and vote. Especially during the last days of the campaign to elect members of the Constituent Assembly, the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) radio continually broadcast appeals, using scripts written by women themselves.

28. A National Women's Summit was organized around International Women's Day, resulting in a five-point agenda which women presented to all Cambodian political parties in the presence of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Cambodia. The Summit became a rallying point for women's continuing involvement in the political process. One of its vehicles is a new organization called "Ponleu" or "Flame" (after the candles that were lit at the end of the Summit), formed by the participants to ensure that the five-point

agenda is included in the Constitution and continues to be paid heed in the future.

29. To equip themselves for the lobbying work ahead, the women have been attending workshops on women's rights and the Constitution, organized by UNIFEM and the Cambodian non-governmental organization, Khemara, in cooperation with the Human Rights Component of UNTAC, UNICEF and the Asia Foundation. A participatory approach has consistently been used by the women to raise awareness and create consensus. Some workshop participants visited four provinces to conduct dialogues with local women, and obtained their recommendations to be taken up with the Constituent Assembly.

30. Another example of a catalytic and strategic intervention occurred in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, where economic liberalization created a political environment that had a marked impact on the capacity of the mass-based Lao Women's Union to affect political decision-making. To determine a course of action aimed at strengthening the Union as a voice of women in the country, UNIFEM conducted a seminar for the Union, key State officials and non-governmental organizations. An outcome was a proposed project to strengthen the leadership and capacity of the Union to influence decision-making at this critical time in the country's development. This project will draw on UNIFEM's experience with a capacity-building training of trainers programme for women in Asia and the Pacific developed in 1992.

31. As important as the ability of women to participate in decision-making is their capacity to create their own agenda for change. In India, a group of women came together in a UNIFEM-organized meeting to develop the concept of alternative approaches to the structural adjustment programme. They agreed on a conceptual framework which takes into consideration the needs of the people and the impact of globalization on developing country economies. This model will be developed and refined with women throughout the region, and will be presented at the Fourth World Conference on Women at Beijing.

32. During the present reporting period, a thorough review and evaluation was undertaken of 15 major projects within the Asia/Pacific development strategy. The evaluations point to the need to strengthen the ability of women to understand the way decisions are made and to develop the skills to influence that process.

Agriculture and food security

33. The main focus of the agriculture programme during the present reporting period has been to explore ways to implement Agenda 21 1/ and the non-governmental organization alternative treaties as they apply to women and agriculture. Follow-up consultations to the UNIFEM-sponsored Peasant Women's Summits, held prior to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), were convened in Bangladesh, Pakistan and Nepal. These consultations resulted in the formulation of country-specific plans of action. A regional follow-up meeting took place as well, in India.

34. The national consultations on agriculture and environment have resulted in specific interventions. In Bangladesh and Pakistan, the final recommendations

will be presented to relevant government ministries, departments, national and international organizations, the media and women's organizations. In Nepal, detailed recommendations resulted as to who will take responsibility in different areas, as well as the financial and human resources required. In India, a task force was formed which planned a model project in animal husbandry. A regional network, with headquarters in Pakistan, has been launched to link these efforts and strengthen local capacity.

35. The health hazards of pesticides was a serious concern raised by women at the Peasant Women's Summits. A meeting was therefore held between project coordinators of the Summits and the UNIFEM-funded International Organization of Consumers Unions project "Women and pesticides: training and education", based in Malaysia, to begin collaborative efforts to address the issue. The meeting was followed by a joint workshop in Pakistan on women and pesticide use. In addition, three of eight country-specific case studies on the impact of pesticides on women were published by the Pesticide Action Network of Asia and the Pacific in "Victims without voice: a study of women pesticide workers in Malaysia".

36. In western Asia, UNIFEM is supporting the Queen Alia Social Welfare Fund in Jordan to enhance its capacity to undertake community organizing, training and research prior to implementing a full-fledged food and dairy processing project. The aims of the project are to make women visible to policy makers, to mainstream gender issues in agriculture and to increase the agricultural output and income of women.

Trade and industry

37. The Asia/Pacific Section strategy on trade and industry has identified several types of activities to help create a positive environment for women manufacturing workers and entrepreneurs. In this context, a project, on "Monitoring the impact of new technologies on women's industrial work" was undertaken in collaboration with the Institute for New Technologies of the United Nations University. It aims to mainstream gender issues in national and international policies related to the implementation and transfer of new technologies in the Asia and Pacific region. It will also monitor the impact of these policies through the establishment of data bases.

38. Industrial restructuring, including privatization and subcontracting to local companies, in countries such as India, Pakistan and Bangladesh has displaced thousands of women workers. As a result, women work harder when demand is high in the export market and are made redundant when demand falls. The need for a response from women workers to this changing scenario has become even more urgent.

39. The UNIFEM-supported regional organization Committee for Asian Women is focusing on assisting women workers affected by industrial restructuring through training and facilitating networking among women workers' organizations, and is providing documentation for information exchange among local groups. The Committee also organized several gender-sensitivity training sessions for women leaders and organizers in the Philippines and Thailand and an exchange visit of Korean women workers with women leaders of Thai trade unions.

40. In western Asia, a UNIFEM initiative was undertaken in Syria to strengthen institutions for women's enterprise development. Funds have been pledged from UNDP and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), with interest also expressed by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the World Food Programme (WFP) to participate in the project.

41. In the Unit Arab Emirates, UNIFEM sent a mission to assist the Abu Dhabi's Women Association with a review of their activities, with the aim of setting up an income-generating programme for women living in poverty. The Association will fund the project from its own resources.

Macro-policies and national development planning

42. During 1993, the Asia/Pacific Section focused on helping government structures to increase their capacity to take gender into consideration in planning and implementation. The Philippines has been the training laboratory for UNIFEM's longest experience in this area through its support of the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women. Beginning with the formulation of the Philippine Development Plan for Women, a current project focuses on institutionalizing gender-responsive planning in key sectoral ministries.

43. Evidence of the rationale for integrating gender issues into national development plans is the number of mainstream institutions coming forward to endorse the approach. As more Governments see the validity of using a gender perspective in development planning, requests for technical assistance have increased. A technical cooperation among developing countries approach has been used to share the learning from the Philippine experience through organized study tours. In addition, the training programme UNIFEM launched three years ago for gender and development specialists anticipated this need, and is being used to train both government officials and policy-oriented non-governmental organizations.

44. Sex-disaggregated data and statistics are an important tool in gender-responsive planning. But even where these are available, building national capacity to analyse and use them requires training and sustained political will. A UNIFEM-supported workshop in Maldives was followed by a UNIFEM team working closely with the Ministry of Planning and Environment, the National Women's Council and the Department of Women's Affairs to develop a project to use effectively the data gathered for development planning.

Violence against women

45. In support of UNIFEM's system-wide concern for women's rights as human rights, the Asia/Pacific Section has supported the Sexual Violence Intervention Centre (Sakshi) in India. The project, which started operations in March 1993, has held workshops in Bangalore and Maysore on sexual violence and communication. Together with participants from all over India, Sakshi has developed a package on communication and counselling techniques, and its training and resource-building methodologies have been used by various government agencies. Sakshi has also started a national drive to link up with other resource centres, women's studies groups, women's organizations and other

research groups to share information and build an information and documentation centre.

D. Latin America and the Caribbean

46. Within the context of UNIFEM's main programme areas, the Latin America and Caribbean Section stresses capacity-building, empowerment and collaboration with appropriate partners at the local, national and international levels. The Latin America and Caribbean programme focuses on environmental management and education; citizenship development and democratization; institutional capacity-building of women's organizations; and advocacy and support of initiatives focusing on the theme of violence against women.

47. During the report period, the Section placed special emphasis on fostering collaboration with key partners in programme design and funding, as well as project implementation. Another important area deals with issues of particular concern to indigenous and black women in the region.

48. UNIFEM and UNICEF are working collaboratively throughout the region to strengthen leadership training and national policy-making from a gender perspective; to plan for several subregional meetings to foster networking among women's non-governmental organizations; or efforts to lobby parliaments at the subregional level in favour of legislation that benefits women (Andean region); and for the establishment of national machineries for women.

49. UNIFEM has also intensified its collaboration with the Inter-American Development Bank. Discussions with the Bank are under way on several innovative projects, including a major debt-for-development swap, as well as a seminar on the probable gender impact of the creation of a free-trade zone linking Uruguay, Argentina, Paraguay and Brazil (the Southern Cone Common Market (MERCOSUR)).

50. UNIFEM also provides a link between local women's actions and national and international policy-setting to ensure that policies respond to the concerns of women at the grass-roots level. It has alliances with a wide variety of non-governmental organizations and groups, such as the Women and Development Unit of the University of the West Indies and the world-wide network Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era in the Caribbean; and the Mexican Society for Women's Rights, Fempress and Isis International in Latin America.

Agriculture and food security

51. While the growth of urban areas has accelerated in Latin America and the Caribbean, rural poverty persists and in some areas has worsened in the past decade. Food security is a particularly critical issue for rural women who are refugees of war or displaced by civil strife. UNIFEM has therefore focused on the immediate well-being of these most vulnerable groups. At the same time, it works to ensure that macro-level agricultural policies take into account the roles women play and the obstacles they face as producers and consumers in the rural economy.

52. One of UNIFEM's principal programmes in the region is its Andean women's food technology initiative. This innovative programme combines public education on the role of women in agriculture with assistance in networking for individual production groups and/or rural cooperatives in Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela.

53. Numerous groups are invited to take part in an annual Andean women's food technology contest. Based on last year's contest, public education materials have been produced and are being used by policy makers and non-governmental organizations throughout the region to increase public awareness of the important roles of women in agricultural production in the Andes.

54. In an effort to build further upon the successes of this initiative, UNIFEM has worked with the Foundation for Agropecuarian Development (FUNDAGRO) of Ecuador to design a $3 million, five-year innovative food security programme for the country, involving women in non-traditional production and marketing of ecologically sustainable agricultural crops, such as the highly nutritious quinua.

55. UNIFEM has taken steps to outline the parameters of a possible debt-for-development swap to underwrite the proposed FUNDAGRO project, involving international donors and the Ecuadorian Government. Active fund-raising for this initiative is in process.

Trade and industry

56. Two key elements in UNIFEM's strategy for enhancing the socio-economic development of women in the region are improving women's access to credit, a particular challenge in a region prone to high inflation, and structuring programmes that enhance the ability of women to manage their own funds.

57. UNIFEM provides support to ACCION International, a non-governmental organization with a proven history of credit service and training. In the first year ACCION operationalized a bridge-fund capable of extending over $1 million in loans to local lending affiliates in Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia and Guatemala, which have in turn made micro- and small loans to women entrepreneurs and farmers. Discussions with local commercial banks are exploring ways to integrate micro-lending programmes more fully within the services offered by formal banking operations.

58. In addition to region-wide credit programmes, UNIFEM is also supporting the management and gender training of micro-enterprise groups. UNIFEM sponsored a regional workshop on "Micro-enterprise and gender" in Ecuador, which focused on strategies for continued integration of gender into income-generating programmes and ways to improve credit and marketing assistance.

59. In the Caribbean, UNIFEM is encouraging policy analysis of issues related to women and micro-enterprise development. In Jamaica, a study is being conducted by the Institute of Social and Economic Research and the Women and Development Studies Faculty of the University of the West Indies (Mona Campus). The study is identifying the factors that contribute to the growth or stagnation

of women's small businesses (given the overall effects of the country's structural adjustment programme).

60. In connection with the preparations by Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay and Argentina to form a Southern Cone Common Market (MERCOSUR), UNIFEM is supporting simultaneous policy analyses of the potential impact such a macro-level economic arrangement would have on women in each country.

61. In collaboration with the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences (FLACSO), one of the region's oldest and most respected networks of social science research institutes, UNIFEM is sponsoring a seminar on MERCOSUR to involve scholars and policy analysts, representatives of key United Nations organizations (UNICEF, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), International Labour Organization (ILO), World Health Organization (WHO) and UNDP), staff of the Inter-American Development Bank, members of ECOFORCA (a regional network of non-governmental organizations), and other groups from within the women's movement. Analyses of the impact of market changes on women in the subregion are likely to have a catalytic effect on research elsewhere in the hemisphere.

62. UNIFEM has contributed to several programmes at the country and community levels to facilitate the entry of women into non-traditional occupations. In Cuba, UNIFEM supported the Federation of Cuban Women in their efforts to design and implement a training programme for women in the recently reinvigorated marble sector. In Ecuador, a local training programme for women carpenters was funded in conjunction with a larger community development programme funded by CARE International.

Macro-policies and national planning

63. UNIFEM has an integrated strategy throughout the region for leveraging the impact of its modest funds by collaborating with other organizations of the United Nations system, as well as with multilateral funders and dynamic women's organizations.

64. In Paraguay, where democratization and social reform have been under way since 1989, UNIFEM has supported women's efforts to approach the entire process from a gender perspective. Working closely with ECLAC to ensure implementation of legal reforms at the community level, elected municipal officials have been encouraged to carry out their duties with greater sensitivity toward the gender dynamics in their local communities.

65. UNIFEM is also supporting the Service for the Formation and Studies of Women, the principal coordinator of women's advocacy within the Paraguayan Constituent Assembly, in its efforts to help secure concrete, critical legal gains in the rewriting of the country's Constitution in 1992.

66. The promotion of networking within the women's movement is another of the initiatives being undertaken in the region. One highly acclaimed initiative began in 1992, when UNIFEM supported the first Encounter of Black Women from Latin America and the Caribbean, held in the Dominican Republic. The Latin America and Caribbean Section also coordinated two follow-up panels in

Costa Rica (in conjunction with the Africa Section), bringing together policy makers and representatives from women's groups from three continents to discuss the challenges facing black women worldwide.

67. To enhance the fund-raising and management capacities of women's non-governmental organizations, UNIFEM is sponsoring, with the Management Development Programme of UNDP and the Instituto de la Mujer of Spain, a project that provides technical assistance to Flora Tristan, a women's centre in Peru, and Rede Mulher, a network of women's groups in Brazil. The lessons learned and methodologies developed will be shared widely with other women's non-governmental organizations.

Refugees and violence: responding to women in crisis

68. In Central America, UNIFEM has worked to promote basic food security among refugee women while seeking to integrate gender and environment issues into rural development programmes more generally. Throughout 1992 and 1993, UNIFEM, in cooperation with the International Fund for Agricultural Development, designed programme strategies for environmentally sustainable agricultural development, resource use and income generation among women war refugees and others displaced by internal conflict in the region.

69. Under the umbrella of a $90 million post-war regional development effort established by the second International Conference on Central American Refugees, UNIFEM also designed gender components for ongoing relief programmes in El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua. Local non-governmental organizations were identified to implement projects in El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua.

70. Advocacy by and for women against violence is the focus of some of UNIFEM's most dynamic work in the region. At the regional level, UNIFEM was instrumental in supporting the creation of a Latin American and Caribbean Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence (headquartered at Isis International in Chile). The network facilitates the work of groups involved in providing immediate services to the hundreds of thousands of women in the region affected by sexual violence and physical battery. It also coordinates the efforts of numerous groups seeking to promote legislative reform and greater social recognition concerning violence against women.

71. Because of the high incidence of domestic and sexual violence in the Andes (ranking as the leading cause of death for women between the ages of 15 and 40 in some countries), UNIFEM continues to support a refuge house for women in the capital of Ecuador, and is seeking to do the same in Bolivia. An innovative programme funded by UNIFEM in Venezuela enabled the Caracas-based Venezuelan Association for Alternative Sexual Education (AVESA) fully to institutionalize a gender-awareness training programme for police officers and university security personnel who attend to battered women throughout the city.

72. Since the programme was founded in 1989, AVESA has trained over 500 officers, created a network of women's centres throughout the country and trained visiting staff from the refuge house for battered women in Ecuador. AVESA is preparing another south-south training exchange with members of the UNIFEM-supported Rape Crisis Center of Trinidad and Tobago.

E. Global initiatives

73. Consistent with its overall programming objectives in 1993, UNIFEM has undertaken numerous initiatives to strengthen and consolidate its programmes relating to women, the environment and development, women's rights as human rights and the changing roles of women in strategic areas such as political decision-making, science and technology and finance.

Women, environment and development

74. Following its contributions to placing women on the agenda in relation to UNCED in 1992, UNIFEM ensured the wide distribution of its publication "Agenda 21: an easy reference to specific recommendations on women". UNIFEM has continued to integrate women, environment and development concerns into its core programming and has attracted additional resources pledged by the Government of Sweden to support these efforts.

75. Each region is undertaking projects which support women and sustainable development and is capitalizing on these experiences to influence policy change that is supportive of women's efforts. UNIFEM's women, environment and development programme has also been strengthened by a series of staff training programmes and by the fine-tuning of UNIFEM's environmental guidelines, which all staff tested over a three-month period in their day-to-day project-related work.

76. UNIFEM is giving high priority to its working relationships with the UNDP Environment and Natural Resources Group, and has participated in the UNDP Capacity 21 Steering Committee, where the Fund has been working with UNDP to promote capacity-building and decision-making with and for women.

77. As co-chair of the ad hoc United Nations and Financial Institutions Working Group on Women, Environment and Development, UNIFEM organized a presentation and discussion by representatives of the implementing partners of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), to explore how women, environment and development programmes might qualify for GEF funding.

78. UNIFEM has assumed a lead role in developing inter-agency coordination and information-sharing among members of the Working Group, and contributed to the UNEP/World Bank "International consultation on advancing women in ecosystem management". The Consultation engaged United Nations senior managers of women in development and environmental programmes to collaborate on policy-setting and advancing programming objectives for women, environment and development.

Women's rights as human rights

79. UNIFEM's participation in a comprehensive strategy and plan of action in preparation for the World Conference on Human Rights was significant in ensuring that women's human rights were incorporated in the final document produced by the Vienna Conference.

80. Assisted by the Government of Canada, UNIFEM enabled advocates for women's human rights from Africa, Asia, the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean to

attend the final Preparatory Committee meeting for the World Conference on Human Rights, where they developed a common agenda around women's human rights and built coalitions with other non-governmental organizations.

81. UNIFEM also co-hosted a seminar on "Calling for change: international strategies to end violence against women", held at The Hague immediately prior to the World Conference on Human Rights, in collaboration with the Government of the Netherlands and the North-South Institute of Canada. This provided another important opportunity for women's rights advocates to reach consensus and to develop strategies for influencing the Conference.

82. The Vienna Declaration's recognition of gender-based violence as a human rights violation in both public and private spheres was a significant achievement for women at the World Conference. UNIFEM's success at the Conference led to the establishment of its global programme on women's human rights. This initiative has supported activities such as the expert group meeting on strategies to eradicate violence against women, convened by the Division for the Advancement of Women of the United Nations Secretariat in collaboration with UNIFEM and the Centre for Women's Global Leadership. Other UNIFEM initiatives relating to women's human rights have included support for the production of two educational videos on the global campaign for women's human rights.

Women and political decision-making

83. As part of its overall outreach and advocacy efforts, UNIFEM has sought to strengthen relationships with parliamentarians world wide, particularly with women parliamentarians whose critical intervention has raised government interest in, and support for, UNIFEM's work.

84. UNIFEM's ongoing collaboration with the International Parliamentary Union provided the opportunity for the Fund to advise the Union on the importance of including an agenda item on international preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women during its biannual meetings of women parliamentarians. UNIFEM joined the Chinese delegation and the Division for the Advancement of Women in panel discussions on the World Conference at those meetings.

85. Ongoing collaboration with Parliamentarians for Global Action has been strengthened through UNIFEM's support in bringing women parliamentarians from developing countries to the International Parliamentary Workshops on Population and Development being held to prepare for the International Conference on Population and Development. The workshops succeeded in raising parliamentary awareness of the special role of women in population and development issues.

86. An opportunity for increased collaboration with European parliamentarians has also been established following a UNIFEM presentation to the Women's Rights Committee of the European Commission in March 1993.

Women, science and technology

87. Since early 1992, UNIFEM has been involved in the formation of an informal consortium of organizations working in the field of gender, science and

technology. The consortium has developed a programme to undertake and encourage a series of collaborative activities which promote and recognize the roles of women in science and technology. As a contribution to the Fourth World Conference on Women, the consortium is planning a "Once and future pavilion" at the parallel non-governmental organization forum. The exhibition will illustrate women's contributions to sustainable development through their application of science and technology. A secretariat has been established in Jamaica, hosted by the Third World Organization for Women in Science.

88. In recognition of UNIFEM's partnerships within the women, science and technology community, the Division for the Advancement of Women requested the Fund to convene an expert group meeting on "Women, science and technology: new visions for the 21st century". Fifty-five leading thinkers and practitioners from Governments, non-governmental organizations, science and technology institutions, the academic community and United Nations organizations came together to discuss priority areas of concern, and made recommendations for research and action for consideration by the conference secretariat in preparing the World Conference on Women "Platform for action".

Women and finance

89. UNIFEM initiated an International Coalition on Women and Credit in 1993. The Coalition is made up of 25 founding members, including the Self-Employed Women's Association Cooperative Bank, the Grameen Bank, ACCION International, Banco Solidario, the Foundation for International Community Assistance and Women's World Banking (which acts as the secretariat). The Coalition's objective is to mobilize around the World Conference on Women and the preparatory regional conferences to raise awareness about the issues of credit for women's micro- and small enterprises. The Coalition is producing a series of videos on the impact of credit on women's micro-enterprises and conducting impact studies of micro-lending institutions.

90. In collaboration with leading international non-governmental organizations, UNIFEM conducted an impact study of eight projects supporting small and medium-scale enterprises in food processing and textiles. The studies, funded by Appropriate Technology International, the Intermediate Technology Development Group and UNIFEM, examined the degree to which the projects had increased women's income and improved their family's nutrition and education.

91. International trade is becoming an area of strategic importance for UNIFEM owing to its direct impact on the standard of living and availability of resources for women in developing countries. As a first step in addressing this critical topic, UNIFEM sponsored a two-day seminar on women and international trade. The meeting aimed at assisting UNIFEM to outline the main content of a strategy on the subject and identify an agenda for research and action that would help women better understand the impact of trade policies and the ways in which they can advocate for change and intervene in policy-making arenas on their own behalf.

F. Programme quality control

92. Over the past three years, UNIFEM has been working to strengthen its project management systems by undertaking the following steps:

(a) Training for all project managers;

(b) Establishment of priority programming areas;

(c) Revision of guidelines for project appraisal and approval;

(d) Revision of the project document;

(e) Revision and computerization of the budget management system for UNIFEM projects;

(f) Organization of regional training workshops for project managers and their counterparts;

(g) Development of operational guidelines for credit projects.

93. UNIFEM's commitment to empower women largely depends on its project managers, who carry out the field work for project execution. The training provided at its regional workshops is a major instrument for providing them with the necessary skills and confidence to carry out their work.

94. A regional training workshop for the managers of UNIFEM-supported micro-enterprise and credit projects for women in Asia and the Pacific, the third in a series, was held in Bangladesh in February 1993. A total of 18 participants from eight countries (Jordan, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam) discussed lessons learned on gender awareness, credit, feasibility studies, marketing and advocacy. The challenge now is how to follow up systematically on these training workshops so that the impact on project managers can be assessed.

95. As another important element of its training strategy, UNIFEM supported the development of a training manual entitled "A training programme for assisting women in accessing credit for viable economic activities". A UNIFEM-funded workshop for testing and evaluating the draft manuals was attended by 7 professional trainers and 18 field project managers from different regions of the world.

Programme design and appraisal

96. The Monitoring and Evaluation Unit acts as the "gatekeeper" for UNIFEM to ensure that project documents meet the standards agreed to by staff, incorporate recommendations of the project appraisal committee process and give due consideration to lessons learned from previous project evaluations. A simplified format for the project document has been developed and is being tested for any necessary modifications.

97. In an effort to use effective management tools for monitoring organizational performance, two new databases have been developed and are currently in use. The first tracks all projects by date and status, and the second reviews the status of all projects by category, including implementing organization, financial and reporting commitments, technical cooperation and numbers of beneficiaries.

98. The Unit has also begun devising and refining indicators to measure the impact of UNIFEM's interventions. The framework for this exercise aligns the Fund's work in monitoring and evaluation with its mandate to be innovative and catalytic. Important elements of the methodology include the identification of changes at the micro- and macro-levels and the participation of women from UNIFEM projects in the identification of indicators.

Representation and collaboration with other institutions

99. As a follow-up to the International Conference on Gender Training held at Bergen in 1991, a second workshop was held under the auspices of the Population Council and the Royal Tropical Institute of the Netherlands at Amsterdam in June 1993. Additional funding was provided by the Netherlands, CIDA and UNIFEM. Workshop recommendations included increased coordination of donor assistance to gender training programmes, the publication of a gender training manual and the convening of regional workshops to explore the development of indigenous training materials and analytical frameworks.

100. UNIFEM continues to collaborate with UNDP, the Economic Development Institute of the World Bank and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in a joint programme on gender training. At the request of UNDP's Gender Training Coordinator, the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit facilitated the incorporation of UNIFEM's mainstreaming experiences into the curriculum for a UNDP workshop in September 1993.

101. The Fund is also participating in the Poverty Alleviation and Grass-roots Participation Task Force, which is chaired by UNDP. The Task Force is working to stimulate a system-wide discussion on the topic. UNIFEM provided a summary of its experiences for the background discussion paper and responds to requests for information on women and poverty alleviation.

G. Outreach and advocacy

102. UNIFEM has developed a comprehensive communications and information plan in conjunction with the UNIFEM strategy towards the Fourth World Conference on Women. The plan emphasizes improved coordination of publications, videos, special events and media coverage in relation to major United Nations conferences, a series of publications targeted to the World Conference on Women, the channelling of conference-related information to women's grass-roots organizations and the streamlining of UNIFEM's distribution systems.

103. UNIFEM is continuing to expand and benefit from its growing network of national committees. By the end of 1993, Canada, Liechtenstein, Switzerland and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland were launching new

committees, increasing the official number to 16. At the fifth global meeting of UNIFEM national committees, held in Paris in April 1993, the participants agreed to collaborate in their preparations for the non-governmental organization forum to be held parallel to the Fourth World Conference on Women. National committees have also been engaged in a series of special events to promote UNIFEM, including high-profile benefits throughout the United States and Canada. Julie Andrews, UNIFEM Goodwill Ambassador, has also continued publicly to express her support for the Fund.

104. During the present reporting period there has also been strengthened collaboration with major international women's organizations, such as Zonta International and Soroptimist International, through information-sharing and their funding support to UNIFEM projects.

105. UNIFEM has also participated in regular Joint United Nations Information Committee meetings, which have provided an opportunity for the Fund to contribute to United Nations exhibitions, videos, broadcasting and photography missions in preparation for United Nations world conferences.

106. The Advocacy Programme, established in 1992, gained momentum during the reporting period. The Fund published the first three issues of its newsletter, UNIFEM News, on environment, human rights and leadership, in English, French and Spanish. UNIFEM News now has a circulation of 20,000 and is widely appreciated both within and outside the United Nations system.

107. Other publications produced under the programme include a paper entitled "Focusing on women" and two training manuals/technical guidelines: "Another point of view: a gender analysis training manual for grass-roots workers"; and "An end to debt: operational guidelines for credit projects".

108. The UNIFEM Editorial Advisory Committee met for the first time at Princeton University in May, and assisted the Fund in determining criteria for the selection of manuscripts to be published, as well as ways of developing its publications programme and in identifying women authors and southern publishing houses.

109. UNIFEM's marketing and distribution project, "Women, Ink.", executed by the International Women's Tribune Centre (IWTC), successfully handled the free distribution of UNIFEM News and is maintaining UNIFEM's growing mailing list. The Acquisitions Committee for Women, Ink., composed of staff from UNIFEM and IWTC, plus three external experts, selected 30 additional titles to be included in the October 1993 Women, Ink. catalogue of women-in-development publications, which has a distribution of 30,000.

III. ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Organizational enhancement

110. The main focus of the 1993 annual Strategic Planning Workshop was the preparation of a paper entitled "UNIFEM strategy towards the Fourth World Conference on Women", which outlines the objectives and modalities for UNIFEM's

preparations for the Conference at Beijing in 1995. The document has been widely distributed to Governments, donor groups, parliamentarians, non-governmental organizations, women's organizations and individuals as part of the Fund's communications and information plan towards the Conference.

111. Following the Strategic Planning Workshop, a one-day training session was held on the devolution of some programming and financial decision-making to the UNIFEM subregional offices. Based on a comprehensive but simplified set of guidelines developed for the Direct Action Ceiling and Small Project Facility programmes, the workshop also provided field personnel with an effective tool to manage those projects.

112. The report of a May 1993 task force, convened by the United Nations Secretary-General and chaired by Ms. Nafis Sadik, Executive Director of UNFPA, endorsed a proposed merger of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women with UNIFEM. The report was approved by the Secretary-General, discussed at the Economic and Social Council in July and submitted to the Third Committee of the General Assembly, which postponed its decision on the matter until 1994.

Personnel

113. The responsibilities of the UNIFEM field programme personnel extend far beyond those of project and programme administration. Regional Programme Advisers and Junior Professional Officers, experts themselves in gender and development, also work as advocates for women to bring women's concerns to the attention of policy makers at all levels of government. The participation of these UNIFEM staff in regional and national meetings, conferences and seminars helps to ensure that the priority needs of women are addressed and that the benefits of development are accrued to women as well as men.

114. In 1993, two UNIFEM Regional Programme Advisers assumed their duties in Mexico and Ecuador. A third opened the UNIFEM office at Lagos, covering anglophone west African countries. Four new Junior Professional Officers, supported by the Governments of the Netherlands and Germany, also joined UNIFEM in 1993.

Finance and administration

115. Even with the current global economic downturn there appears to be every indication that core contributions to UNIFEM will remain strong. Cost-sharing and sub-trust fund contributions also show increases, reflecting donor confidence in UNIFEM's programme activities.

116. Based on a proposal endorsed by UNIFEM's Consultative Committee at its January 1993 session, the former UNDP Governing Council, at its fortieth session, held in June, approved the UNIFEM 1992/93 revised Biennium Administrative Budget of $5.6 million and its 1994/95 Biennium Administrative Budget Estimates of $6.6 million. This increases core posts by one General Service staff member, who performs the duties of receptionist and handles the increase in telephone communications. The UNDP Governing Council also confirmed

the reclassification of two Professional posts from P-4 to P-5 and one from P-3 to P-4.

117. The introduction of a phased plan for devolution of certain financial/programme approval authority to the Regional Programme Advisers has moved to the implementation stage. Guidelines and procedures for appropriate financial/programme control and monitoring have been finalized and, as noted above, a training workshop on execution was conducted for both headquarters and field staff.

Project and programme delivery

118. As a result of the streamlining of the project appraisal process and the enhancement of its management capacity, UNIFEM programme delivery has improved significantly. The Fund's plan to reduce accumulated resources in a carefully monitored manner has resulted in a 24 per cent increase in 1993 project expenditures. The total expenditures for 1993 approached $17.4 million, which is $5.5 million in excess of the 1993 total income of $11.9 million. The excess is covered by a corresponding reduction in accumulated resources.

119. With the approach of the Fourth World Conference on Women and the implementation of the Fund's strategy towards the Conference, UNIFEM is confident that programme delivery for 1994 and 1995 will continue to increase. In anticipation of the Conference in 1995, the Fund looks forward to the renewed support and collaboration of its many partners.

Notes

1/ Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992 (A/CONF.151/26/Rev.1 (Vol. I, Vol. I/Corr.1, Vol. II, Vol. III and Vol. III/Corr.1)) (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: Resolutions adopted by the Conference, resolution 1, annex II.